



®

Accent

An Avila University Publication

FALL 2017

The Avila Promise



Avila Leads the Way in Price Transparency
and Value | **PAGE 6**

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



The University Singers capture the spirit of celebration at the President's Circle Reception during Homecoming Weekend 2017.

Dear Alumni and Friends,

This is an exciting time at Avila University.

This year we not only celebrated the conclusion of our Centennial Campaign – which through your support made a \$44 million-dollar philanthropic impact on Avila University – but we also introduced the Avila Promise. This is a ground-breaking initiative that addresses the concerns most college students and their families face, including college affordability and student debt, on-time graduation, and preparedness for their lives after graduation.

We firmly believe that the Avila Promise will further strengthen the value of an Avila degree, which not only benefits current and future students but also reflects positively on you – our network of more than 13,000 alumni across the globe.

We hope you'll help us deliver on this promise by:

- ▶ Serving as a mentor
- ▶ Encouraging your company to host Avila students as interns

- ▶ Providing support for travel awards and support for scholarships. Under our new tuition model, your scholarship gifts go even further to cover more of a student's tuition
- ▶ Talking to your networks of friends, family and co-workers about what's going on at Avila
- ▶ Referring students to check out your alma mater

Remember, dependents and siblings of Avila alumni may be eligible for a mission grant of up to \$500 annually. And, students who graduate from a Catholic High School will receive a \$5,000 guarantee.

Thank you for what you do to make our mission and initiatives like the Avila Promise possible. You certainly make Avila PROUD!

Gratefully,

Ronald A. Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA
President



President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, expresses his appreciation for the extraordinary philanthropy efforts over the course of the Centennial Campaign during the Heritage Society luncheon.

Avila President

Ronald A. Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA

**Vice President for Advancement
and External Relations**

Angie Heer, CFRE

Editor

Darren Roubinek

Senior Director of Marketing
and Communication

Lead Writer

James Wright '84, CSJA

Designer

Maureen Reardon, CSJA

Contributors

Bailey Carr '09, '12, CSJA

Brandon Droge

Estuardo Garcia Photography

Deanna Johnson

Deanna Nelson

David Riffel Photography

Priscilla Subramaniyam '13, MBA

Adonna Thompson

*Accent is published biannually by the
Office of Marketing & Communication.
Opinions expressed in Accent are those of
individual authors and do not necessarily
reflect the views of the University.*

Contact Us

Send comments, story ideas
or letters to:

Accent

Avila University

11901 Wornall Road

Kansas City, MO 64145

816.501.3602

Advancement@avila.edu

Avila.edu



*The Avila Promise: tuition protection, guaranteed internship or research
experience, guaranteed four-year graduation, up to \$1,000 travel award*

06



- 02 Accent on Avila
- 06 Feature Story
- 08 Faculty Accomplishments
- 09 Global Community
- 10 Campus Life
- 11 Heritage, Spirituality & Service
- 12 Alumni News & Events
- 16 Eagles Athletics
- 17 Class Notes
- 19 In Memoriam
- 21 Avila Heritage



Centennial Campaign Goal Exceeded

2017 President's Circle celebrates campaign impact of \$52 million, honors co-chairs

Pictured above: Recipients of the 2017 Father Jean Pierre Medaille Giving Society and the Avila Medal of Honor

Seven years ago, Avila sought to broaden the University's powerful learning experience through six centennial initiatives. Homecoming Weekend 2017 marked the conclusion of the record-breaking Centennial Campaign. The entire Avila community truly contributed to the success of the campaign. Together 4,069 donors raised a total of \$44 million. Add investments the University made in facilities through a bond issue, and the Centennial Campaign resulted in a more than \$52 million impact on Avila.

This year's President's Circle Reception honored five families that played an indispensable role in the campaign's success.

FATHER JEAN PIERRE MEDAILLE GIVING SOCIETY Recognizing cumulative contributions of at least \$1 million

Joseph T. '16 (Hon.) & Susan Fahey have been long and generous supporters of Avila University. Joe is the CEO of J.M. Fahey Construction Company and has served on Avila's Board of Trustees for more than 15 years. Advocates for improving Avila's physical facilities for supportive student learning, the Faheys played a key role in transforming the physical environment of campus and championing a 10-year campus master plan. Joe and Sue are co-chairs of the Centennial Campaign and have served as honorary chairs of the annual Steer Dinner twice, each time raising record dollars for student scholarships. They are recipients of the Avila Medal of Honor and in 2016, Joe received an honorary doctorate from the University.



Pictured left to right, David '76 and Geri Frantze, Mark and Amy Thompson, President Ronald A. Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, Anne '75 and Steve Dunn, Sue and Joe '16 (Hon.) Fahey

For more than a quarter century, **The Sunderland Foundation** has funded construction and capital improvements at Avila. Focusing on the brick and mortar structures for nonprofits, The Sunderland Foundation has been a long-time and generous supporter of Avila. Established in 1945 by Lester T. Sunderland, who served as president of the Ash Grove Cement Company for 33 years, the Foundation has helped to build or improve the Hooley-Bundschu Library and Learning Commons, the Marie Joan Harris Science & Health Complex, Jeanne Collins Thompson Hall, computer labs and the Thornhill Art Gallery.

The Thompson Family has been interwoven throughout the history of Avila University. Family matriarch, Jeanne Collins Thompson '54, is the namesake of Jeanne

Collins Thompson Hall, memorialized by her husband, Byron G. Thompson, Sr., and their children. The family and the family business, Country Club Bank, have made a lasting impact on Avila through scholarships, the Steer Dinner and capital improvements. In 2015, the family dedicated the statue of St. Teresa of Avila in memory of Jeanne and Byron. Their son, **Mark**, is a member of Avila's Board of Trustees. Mark and his wife, **Amy**, also serve as co-chairs of the Centennial Campaign. As chair of the advancement committee, Mark has helped raise millions of dollars for Avila University.

AVILA MEDAL OF HONOR **Honoring those that uphold the values of Avila and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet**

Steve and Anne '75 Dunn served as co-chairs of the Centennial Campaign, helping Avila exceed its campaign goal. As a 1975 nursing alumna, Anne called upon her classmates to support the School of Nursing, particularly during its 65th anniversary

celebration. Steve called upon numerous foundations, corporations and individuals to rally support for the campaign. The couple helped generously make the Marie Joan Harris Science & Health Complex possible through their individual support and the support of J.E. Dunn Construction. Steve also served as a member of Avila's Board of Trustees for more than a decade, including serving as an active member of the advancement committee, the facilities and planning committee and the Steer Dinner committee. Steve and Anne have a steadfast commitment to Catholic education. Their daughter, Maggie, is also an Avila nursing alumna.

David Frantze '76 graduated from Avila with a bachelor of arts in theatre and history. He went on to get his law degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and credits Avila for teaching him the structure and creativity that helped him to practice law. In 2002, Dave joined Avila's Board of Trustees and served on the finance and audit committees. He and his wife, **Geri**, served as co-chairs of the Centennial Campaign and helped raise millions of dollars for the University as a result. In 2013, they chaired the Steer Dinner and in 2014 served as honorary chairs, turning the event into one of the top 10 fundraisers in Kansas City. As a first-generation college student, David and Geri established the Frantze Family Endowed Scholarship, which provides scholarships to first generation students in need. 🙏

What does a \$52 million impact look like?

Together we ...

- ▶ Raised more than \$14 million for student scholarships
- ▶ Created new academic programs and established an innovation fund
- ▶ Built Glenna Wylie Hall, the Hooley-Bundschu Library and Learning Commons, the Marie Joan Harris Science & Health Complex, the Athletic Pavilion and the statue of St. Teresa of Avila
- ▶ Renovated the Marian Center Dining Hall, Mabree Fieldhouse and Whitfield Center
- ▶ Established the Martha Smith Archives & Research Center, the Center for CSJ Heritage & Spirituality, the Center for Global Studies and the Buchanan Initiative for Peace & Nonviolence
- ▶ Increased travel course offerings and provided new travel scholarships
- ▶ Grew Avila's endowment from \$7 million to \$10.5 million



David Kerr '76 Elected Chair

Avila University's Board of Trustees

Alumnus David Kerr '76, former president of AT&T Kansas and director of economic development for the State of Missouri, was elected chair of Avila University's Board of Trustees in May 2017. Kerr succeeds Kenneth Hager, who served as chair from 2015-17.

Kerr earned his bachelor's degree in economics and business administration from Avila in 1976. He went on to work for AT&T, including serving as president of AT&T Kansas from 2003-07, where he was responsible for all regulatory, governmental and external affairs activities in the state. In 2007, Kerr was appointed secretary of the Kansas Department of Commerce by then-Governor Kathleen Sebelius and two years later left to serve as Missouri's director of economic development under then-Governor Jay Nixon.

Kerr has been a Trustee of Avila since 2012, including serving on the executive committee and chairing the enrollment management committee. He generously gives his time, talents and treasure to the University and is a member of the Heritage Society. He has fond memories of playing on the first men's basketball team under Coach Bill Waris and working in the Avila Admission department.

University President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, said, "David Kerr has a long history of community and civic service throughout Missouri and Kansas. His experience in business and economic development, combined with his passion as an alumnus, is invaluable to help propel Avila's strategic focus on student success forward."

Kerr and his wife, Mary, reside in Ballwin, Mo., near their children and grandchildren. 🏡

"... [David's] experience in business and economic development, combined with his passion as an alumnus, is invaluable to help propel Avila's strategic focus on student success forward."

— President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA



2017-2018 Board of Trustees

Matthew J. Beem
Hartsook

Joseph T. Fahey '16 (Hon.)
J.M. Fahey Construction Company

G. Robert Fisher
Dentons (Retired)

Kenneth V. Hager
DST Systems, Inc. (Retired)

Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

J. Robert Hardin '78
Country Club Bank (Retired)

Robert T. Hunter
Financial Counselors, Inc. (Retired)

Mary Frances Johnson, CSJ, Ph.D.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

David D. Kerr '76, Chair
Missouri Department of Economic Development (Retired)

Gregory M. Kratoofil, Jr.
Polsinelli

Vercie L. Lark
DST Systems

Patricia D. Lyon, BSN '00
Community Volunteer

Shawn Madigan, CSJ, Ph.D.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

Mary Margaret Lazio, CSJ '70
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

Ellen Martin, Secretary
Ellen S. Martin Consulting, LLC

Mary McKay, CSJ, Ph.D.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

Tim D. O'Brien '95
Cobalt Med Plans & Preferred Health Professionals

Christine Ojile '82
Kantar Retail Market Insights

Irene O'Neill, CSJ, Ed.D.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

Gary Smith
UBS – Smith Wealth Management Group

Mark C. Thompson
Country Club Bank

Ana Valdez '96
Donnelly College

Michael J. VanDyke
Polsinelli

Rick Weller, Vice-Chair and Treasurer
Euronet Worldwide, Inc.





Mabee Challenge Complete

The spotlight is on Avila once again as it has raised \$6.2 million – the total amount for the project — for the new Goppert Performing Arts Center and met a challenge from The J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation. With the completion of this challenge, Avila will receive a \$750,000 gift from The Mabee Foundation.

The new Goppert Performing Arts Center will be completed in 2019. It will feature 16,000 square feet of new construction and renovated spaces, including the newly-established:

Frantze Black Box Theatre

Roderick J. and Jo Anne Cyr Grand Lobby

Bill and Jean Buchanan Stage in the Goppert Theatre

Travis S. Russell Stage in the Frantze Theatre

Lauren E. Chiodo-Benmuvhar '04 Practice Room

Virginia C. and William D. Tompkins Rehearsal Room

More than 220 alumni, faculty, staff and friends supported this project with gifts from \$1 to \$3.5 million. Each played an important part in helping Avila reach this goal and in demonstrating their commitment to a strong, innovative performing arts program. 🎭

Goppert Theatre

The Bill and Jean Buchanan Stage at Avila University

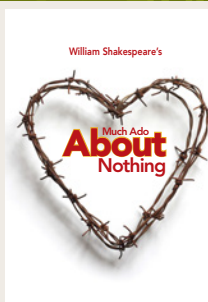


I HATE HAMLET

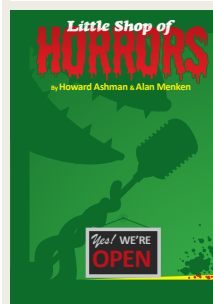
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

THESE SHINING LIVES

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS



THESE SHINING LIVES
By
Melanie Marnich



Much Ado About Nothing

Nov. 16-19, 2017

Holiday Concert

December 8, 2017

These Shining Lives

Feb. 22-25, 2018

Little Shop of Horrors

Apr. 26-29, 2018

Spring Concert

May 4, 2018

Reserve tickets online:

avila.edu/tickets

or call 816.501.3699



#AvilaDayofGiving

Give today to
transform tomorrow.

avila.edu/dayofgiving

FEATURE STORY





Pictured left to right: A group of happy Eagles receive their adjusted tuition packets following the Avila Promise announcement on September 5.

Sophomore Tyler King tells the news media how grateful he is for the tuition decrease and the four Avila Promise cornerstones.

The Avila Promise

A clearer and more affordable path to a bright future

On September 5, Avila President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, stood before a capacity crowd in Mabee Fieldhouse to announce the launch of the Avila Promise. The initiative represents not only a major shift in Avila's pricing model, but it also reinforces Avila's commitment to student success.

"The Avila Promise addresses concerns most college students and their parents face, including college affordability and confusion over college costs, on-time graduation and student debt, gaining desirable experiences outside of the classroom and learning from a global perspective," Slepitzka said. "Student success is the driving force behind Avila University. The Avila Promise will help more students finish their degree in four years, while bringing clarity and transparency to the process of navigating college planning. This promise strengthens the value of an Avila degree, which not only benefits current and future students, but our network of more than 13,000 alumni."

The Avila Promise starts with making college planning more transparent by reducing Avila's published tuition price 33% to \$19,900, which includes books and standard campus

fees. Avila will still offer financial aid and merit-based scholarships, but at lower amounts in balance with the new, lower tuition price.

"The current college financing process is fractured," Slepitzka said. "The traditional model that universities across the country have used for decades sets a high sticker price that is offset by scholarships. This often results in students' misperceptions that a private university, like Avila, is unattainable."

"Students and families desire more tuition transparency and clarity when it comes to the cost of attending college," said Slepitzka. "We're stripping away the 'high-price/high-discount' tuition model and resetting our tuition, moving to a 'low-price/low-discount' model."

The new tuition price model also offers tuition protection, guaranteeing that the tuition rate will not increase more than three percent per year. This allows students and families to better plan for the total cost of an Avila education and protects students from unexpected fee increases and expensive textbooks.

Next, the Avila Promise guarantees that if students do their part, Avila will provide the

exceptional faculty and staff advisors, along with the courses, resources and experiences they need to ensure their on-time graduation. If Avila fails to deliver on our promise, the University will cover the additional tuition expenses necessary for that student to graduate.

Avila will also guarantee that every undergraduate student, in every major, will be engaged in an internship or research project. These experiences will be critical to students as they apply for graduate schools and their first job after graduation.

The fourth cornerstone reinforces Avila's beliefs in interdisciplinary study and immersive cultural experiences. Through the Avila Promise, students will be eligible to apply for up to a \$1,000 travel award their junior year. This is financial support to help students get experience at the national and international level through Avila-sponsored travel courses and research.

"Together, the Avila Promise is a game changer," Slepitzka said. 📣

Pictured left: Avila cheerleaders pump up the capacity crowd in the Mabee Fieldhouse prior to the announcement of the Avila Promise.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Amity Bryson, DMA, music department chair and professor of music, led the University Singers, who were selected as the touring ensemble

for "The Legends of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses." They performed in both Kansas City, Missouri, at the Music Hall and in Des Moines, Iowa, at the Civic Center.

Brian Buckler, Ph.D.,

professor of marketing and director of undergraduate business development, is a co-author of "Comparing Consumer Identities



between Carnists and Vegans: The Importance of Distinguishing Motivations for Going Vegan." His research has been accepted for presentation at the Society for Marketing Advances international annual conference in Louisville, Kentucky, where he will serve as a co-chair of the entrepreneurship track.

Karin Gastreich, Ph.D.,

chair and professor of biology, released her third genre fiction novel, "Daughter of Aithne," a tale of powerful women



opposed to each other yet destined to shatter a thousand-year cycle of war. The Hooley-Bundschu Library at Avila hosted a celebration of the book's release, including a panel discussion on women in genre fiction.



Bradley Poos, Ph.D., assistant professor of education, is the lead faculty member in a partnership with the Hickman Mills School

District for a "Grow Your Own" program. The program helps prepare Ruskin High School seniors who have expressed interest in pursuing a career in education. Students enrolled in the program will take two courses and receive six college credits. Poos is looking to expand the program in future semesters to include area high school students from surrounding school districts.



Eric Winter, MFA, chair of the art and design department and associate professor of graphic design, produced the Design + Music event in

Kansas City, Missouri. Winter has been active with the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) KC for six years and serves as vice president of external programming on its board of directors. 🎨



Professor of the Year: Joe Roberts, Ph.D.

Biochemistry, molecular biology and bow-ties

When Assistant Professor of Chemistry Joe Roberts, Ph.D., arrived on campus, he made it his goal to build a non-traditional chemistry curriculum. Roberts teaches his students to develop an analytical approach to chemistry where students are given questions and equipment, and they are taught to think about the best way to approach the experiment. This hands-on approach to science is one of the many ways that Roberts inspires his students. In the future, he plans to teach a chemistry of brewing class as well as a comic books and science class.

According to the Dean of the School of Science and Health Larry Garrison Sullivan, Ph.D., "Dr. Roberts brings a lot of energy and new ideas to the School of Science and Health and the Avila community. He has changed introductory chemistry offerings to better meet the needs of students and has fully implemented the chemistry component for the biochemistry and molecular biology degree."

A native of Detroit, Roberts graduated from Wayne State University with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and received his Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from the University of North Carolina.

Having students work on research is a top priority for Roberts. Over the past two summers, he has led research for three of his students in the laboratory, watching these research students morph into scientists. It's no surprise to those who know him that Roberts was named "Professor of the Year" after only his second year at Avila. 🎓

"Dr. Roberts brings a lot of energy and new ideas to the School of Science and Health."

— Larry Garrison Sullivan, Ph.D., Dean, School of Science and Health

Fulbright-Hays Scholars to Rwanda

Dr. Karen Garber-Miller leads the way



Avila University led a group of 13 Kansas City-area educators on a 25-day immersion tour of Rwanda this summer. Funded by a Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the initiative was led by Karen Garber-Miller, Ph.D., dean of the School of Education. Entitled *From Genocide to Regeneration – An Exploration of Rwandan Social Justice Issues Through the Lens of Education*, the project brought together teachers from various backgrounds and schools, along with students preparing to be teachers. Together, they traveled to Rwanda for four weeks in July. Seeking to build on Avila

University's growing areas of international and global studies curricular offerings, the scholars interacted with Rwandan students and teachers in an exchange of teaching methods and ideas.

"We were amazed at the work being done for all learners in Rwanda, regardless of age and need," said Brooke Kueser Vanhecke, one of the Fulbright-Hays scholars. "It was incredible to see how the conversations and attitudes toward inclusive education are making headway in Rwanda."

At the end of the project, the Fulbright-Hays scholars shared their experiences with Avila students and the general public during a seminar on the Avila campus.

"The Fulbright-Hays study tour in Rwanda was life-changing for the teachers," Garber-Miller said. "It provided the teacher-scholars with a host of first-hand experiences and resources for curriculum development and tools for sharing the Rwandan genocide and reconciliation with K-12 learners. They returned with a sense of responsibility to tell their stories and help students understand the message of unity." 🇷🇼

*Fulbright-Hays educators interacting with Rwandan school children during their summer initiative: **From Genocide to Regeneration – An Exploration of Rwandan Social Justice Issues Through the Lens of Education.***

Events that Inspire



1. Avila family celebrates Mass of the Holy Spirit. The Avila community began the start of the academic year by gathering together in Foyle Hall to celebrate Mass of the Holy Spirit on September 5. A tradition at Catholic colleges and universities, it calls upon God to bless and inspire each of us and asks the Holy Spirit to guide the university in wisdom. Rev. Keith Branson, C.P.P.S., presided the Mass.

2. Move-In day marks a new beginning. The Avila family, consisting of student volunteers, faculty, staff and even President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, assisted with moving refrigerators, flat-screen televisions, microwaves and futons into the residence halls while helping to make sure everyone felt welcome and at home.

3. First year begins with giving back. Each fall, first year Avila students volunteer for a full day of service at Harvesters – The Community Food Network. This year over 200 students packed more than 65,000 pounds of food for distribution in keeping with Avila's value of "helping the dear neighbor without distinction."

4. Fall carnival equals fun times. Avila's fall carnival took place on August 31. The campus was treated to a great outdoor meal provided by Great Western Dining while campus clubs and organizations promoted their activities. A time capsule from the class of 1992 was opened and Campus Life provided chair massages, sketch artists and other games throughout the quad. 🎉



First Buchanan Activist-in-residence

S. Jeannette Londadjim, CSJ visits from Africa



To further its mission of changing the world through learning, understanding and inspiring nonviolent action, the Buchanan Initiative for Peace and Nonviolence recently hosted its first activist-in-residence. S. Jeannette Londadjim, CSJ, from Chad, was selected from applicants from around the world to help inspire and prepare Avila students to become active and engaged citizens of social justice.

During her two-month visit, Londadjim met with peace studies students, spoke with first-year experience seminar sections, engaged with Avila's Center for Global Studies & Social Justice, as well as the CSJ Center for Heritage, Spirituality & Service. Londadjim also spoke at the opening of the latest Thornhill Gallery exhibit "100 Peace Women Across the Globe." She ended her stay by participating in the Avila

University co-sponsored Peacebuilding and Nonviolence Conference: "Beyond the Clichés." A native French speaker, Londadjim also studied English on campus during her stay.

"Personally, my big challenge is meeting people," Londadjim said. "Meeting people and having a genuine encounter is what guides me in my life. In today's world, there are so many ways of meeting, but I don't always get to do that where I am from."

Londadjim hoped to make an impact for peace while in the United States. "It is a fear of being different that keeps us from understanding one another. I hope to show that we are all the same," Londadjim said. "I would like to discover a shared humanity while in this country. Yes, there are many differences, but there is also so much in common." 🌱



HLC Accreditation Feb. 26-27, 2018

Avila University is seeking comments from the public about the University in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The University will host a visit February 26-27, 2018 with a team representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Avila University has been accredited by HLC since 1946. The team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet HLC's Criteria for Accreditation.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the University to the following address:

**Public Comment on Avila University,
Higher Learning Commission,
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411**

The public may also submit comments on HLC's website at www.hlcommission.org/comment.

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing.

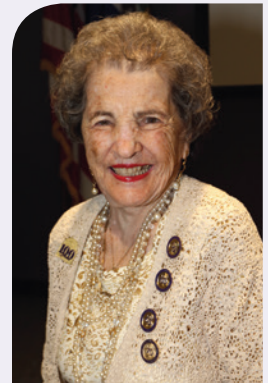
All comments must be received by **January 19, 2018**. 🌱





Celebrating 70th Reunion ►

Rose Marie (Carrollo) Falco '47 proudly wears her reunion pins from her 50th, 60th, 65th and 70th Avila reunions.



Since its inception in 1988, more than 300 alumni and friends of the University have been inducted into the Heritage Society for including Avila in their estate plans or establishing endowed scholarships. Over Homecoming Weekend, 10 members were recognized as members of the Heritage Society.

Heritage Society Inductees ►

Pictured left to right: Mimi Powers '56, Cathy Nigro from the Roderick J. and Jo Anne Cyr Foundation, Marcia Kenley '98, Larry Marsh, Pat Martin, Nadine (Radka) McGurran '61 with President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA

Not pictured: Matt and Kate Beem, Dr. James E. & Mrs. Margaret M. '67 Millard, Jeanne Hamilton Olofson '92, '94, '11 and Jim and Peggy VanDyke

**Mark your calendars for
next year's Homecoming:
Oct. 18 – 21, 2018**





◀ 1947 Class Reunion

All living members of the class of 1947 celebrated their 70th reunion at the Heritage Day Luncheon over Homecoming Weekend.

Pictured back row (left to right):
 Marybeth (Malsie) Swartz-O'Malley '47,
 Rose Marie (Carrollo) Falco '47,
 Mary Elizabeth (Hessel) Heiman '47,
 Pat (Mathews) Van Burskirk '47,
 S. Rosemary Flanigan '47, CSJ, Ph.D.

Front row (left to right): Katy (Childs) Hake '47
 and Maria (La Sala) Mueller '47

1967 Class Reunion ▶

Members from the class of 1967 celebrated their 50th reunion.

Pictured back row (left to right)

Mary (Holland) Schmidt '67,
 Ann (Linton) Kirkpatrick '67,
 Mary Lou (Johnston) Schneider '67,
 Margaret (Donehue) Anderson '67,
 President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA,
 Sr. Andrea Kanter '67, Roberta Lancaster '67

Front row (left to right)

Sharon (Reardon) Flynn '67,
 Jill (Helgersen) Brake '67,
 Georgia (Hearden) Elias '67,
 Jan (McCullough) Taylor '67,
 Julie (Waters) McManus '67



Tailgate & BBQ ▶

Alumni Association Board Members:

Emilee (Bilyeu) Rehling '10, Cecile O'Hare '10,
 Emilee (Bickleman) Hill '12, '16 with daughter,
 Elaina, Cassi (Kline) Furdner '05
 and Scott White '85





▲ Dinner Theatre

Belinda Troxler '88, Bob Crow and S. Jeanne Janssen, CSJ, enjoyed a prime rib dinner at Dinner Theatre before the student production of "I Hate Hamlet."



◀ Performing Arts Reunion

Performing Arts alumni gathered for a reception before Dinner Theatre to reconnect and learn about plans for the arts at Avila.

Pictured left to right: Josh Gleeson '11, Zeke Bocklage '17, Matthew Koehler '15, Jack Bohnenstiehl '16

▼ Alumni Awardees

The 2017 alumni awardees back row (left to right): Carol Frevert, Julie Weiss '78, '83, Lisa (Martin) Sackuvich '81, Kelley (Morris) McDonald '00, President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, Megan Carnes '07, '13, Katelyn Fakes '13, Lisa (Patty) Susunaga '07

Front row (left to right): Paul Sullivan '86, Jane (Tarasova) House '97, '99, Marie (Shelton) Baldwin '06, Mary Elizabeth (Hessel) Heiman '47, Chantell Garrett '12, Mary Kay Whitacre '77



President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, presents Lisa (Martin) Sackuvich '81 with the highest award, the Outstanding Alumnus Award, for her achievements in her nursing career and for her dedication to serving the dear neighbor. Sackuvich is the founder, president and owner of ARJ Infusion Services, Inc.



Alumni Awardees

LISA (MARTIN) SACKUVICH '81
OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS AWARD

JULIE WEISS '78, '83
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

MARY KAY (HUGGINS) WHITACRE '77
ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

MARY ELIZABETH (HESSEL) HEIMAN '47
HONORED CLASS ALUMNI AWARD

KATELYN FRAKES '13
RECENT ALUMNI AWARD

JANE (TARASOVA) HOUSE '97, '99
GRADUATE ALUMNI AWARD

CAROL FREVERT
HONORARY ALUMNI AWARD

Academic Alumni Awardees

KRISTIN ASTOURIAN '07
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS &
SOCIAL SCIENCES

PAUL SULLIVAN '86
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

CHANTELL GARRETT '12
SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

LISA (PATTY) SUSUNAGA '07
SCHOOL OF NURSING

KELLEY (MORRIS) MCDONALD '00
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE & HEALTH

MARIE (SHEETS) BALDWIN '06
SCHOOL OF VISUAL &
COMMUNICATION ARTS

To nominate someone for the 2018 awards, please contact Bailey Carr, director of alumni relations and annual giving, at 816.501.3780 or alumni@avila.edu.



Alumni Association



▲ Soccer Reunion

The annual soccer reunion was held in May with the foot golf tournament at Swope Park Heart of America Golf Course, and the reunion game on campus the next day. **Pictured (left to right):** Danny Myers '10, Cary Lanzoni '11, current player Tarrek Alkhateeb, Brian Garrison '11, current player Weston Waldron, Guillermo Zuniga '12 and Chris Kalicak '12



▲ Football Reunion

The annual football reunion and game was held in May. Alumni returned to campus to scrimmage one another before the spring game and enjoyed lunch together. **Pictured (left to right) front row:** Harley Kreisman, Jarrett Hernandez, Toby Cashell '10, Tyler Cardwell '12, Aaron Wiggins '16, Marco Walker, Derek Pugh '16. **Back row:** Justin Bracamonte '07, Juan Salazar '17, Trevor Lewis '05, Victor Gray '09, Trey Swager '13, Tim Gilday '13, Deonta Wade '15, Nick Ward-Bopp '09, Kevin Larson '05, Chance Alberswerth '13, Jessie Ruiz, Kenneth Coleman '17, Marc Benavidez '12



▲ Ariston Reunion

Each spring, Avila University recognizes an outstanding senior student and awards them the highest student award for their work in the classroom and in the community, the prestigious Ariston Award. Thanks to a gift from the Thompson family, the award has been named the Jeanne Collins Thompson '54 Ariston Award. Thompson was the first recipient of the Ariston Award in 1954. This year's recipient was Michelle Pace. She was welcomed and congratulated by former recipients at the annual Ariston Reunion and Luncheon in May. **Pictured (left to right):** Michelle Pace '17, President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, Jamie Cox Young '03, Brittany Rose '13, Austin Armstrong '15, Angela Metzger '89, Suzanne Fairbanks '77, Teddy (Failoni) Garagiola '72 and Julie (Waters) McManus '67

Heart Tournament Champions



On May 6, the Avila Eagles softball team celebrated three tournament victories in one day to win the Heart Softball Tournament Championship at Bill McKinney Heritage Park in St. Joseph, Missouri.

It was Avila's third straight trip to the Heart Tournament Championship round. This year's success was led by pitcher Kayleigh Behymer, and the offensive power of Sam Castoldi and Mackenzie Pritchett. The Avila Eagles, coached by Samantha Honeycutt, have now won two of the last three Heart Championships, and have had 12 tournament wins in the last three seasons. 🏆



New Athletic Conference, New Possibilities

Avila University will join the 13-member Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) effective in the 2018-19 academic year. With the switch, Avila athletics looks to grow and become even stronger.

"Joining the KCAC is a major step forward for Avila," said Cristina Cowan '10, '15 Avila athletic director. "This is a historic day as we enter a conference that will benefit us in so many ways. Our intention is to add strength to a league that has a long tradition of excellence throughout the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics." 🏆

Check out your Eagles on Avila's Athletic website at avilaathletics.com



▲ 2017 Hall of Fame Inductees

Two individuals and one team were inducted into the Avila Athletics Hall of Fame during Homecoming Weekend. Inductees included Alyson (Young) Hooten '11, women's basketball, Charles (Chuck) Otec '87, men's soccer, and the 2012 Baseball Team.

Front row (left to right): Alyson (Young) Hooten '11, Chuck Otec '86, Anthony J. Herrera, Daryl Conk, Matthew Ricketts '13, Anthony Zicarelli '15, Tanner McCall '15, Nik Field '13, Nathan Bacon '12, Derek Truitt. **Back row** (left to right): James Chapman '12, Tim Gilday '13, Jason Paul '12, Jason Leone '14, Matthew Carpenter



▲ Hall of Fame

2017 Hall of Fame inductee, Alyson (Young) Hooten '11 with daughter and future Eagle.

CLASS NOTES



'08 SARAH (SINOVIC) SANFORD and husband welcomed their first baby, August "Gus" Gerald on May 9, 2017. Gus weighed seven pounds, 15 ounces, and was 21.5 inches long. Sarah works as a radiologic science instructor and clinical coordinator at Avila University.

'47 MARY ELIZABETH (HESSEL) HEIMAN received the 2017 Honored Class Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'58 VIRGINIA (KOPP) COPPINGER and husband, Tom, were honored with the 2017 Aquinas Award. This award recognizes their longstanding support of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph.

'71 CHRISTINE (MOLINA) FRICHEL retired from a 30-plus year career as a school psychologist, and is currently a co-owner with husband, Tom, of Lost Creek Vineyard, a winery located in the Hermann/Marthasville area of Missouri Wine Country.

'71 SISTER PAT LYNCH, who spent her youth between Pennsylvania and Kansas City, Mo., is celebrating 50 years as an Ursuline Sister. She earned a bachelor's degree in English from Avila College in 1971. She earned a master's degree in speech pathology from the University of Kansas in 1974. Sister Pat was superior of the Ursuline Sisters of Paola from 1994-2002, and served as an elected councilor from 1982-90, and again from 2002-2008. (The Ursulines of Paola merged with Mount Saint Joseph in 2008.) She served 15 years in ministry at the Lakemary Center in Paola. From 1987-94, she was an outreach minister at the St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center in Lawrence, Kan. From 2009-16, she served as office manager and campus minister at the Didde Catholic Campus Center at Emporia State University. She is now the elected assistant congregational leader for the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph and lives in Maple Mount.

'77 MARY KAY (HUGGINS) WHITACRE earned her doctorate of ministry from the Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry. Whitacre completed her dissertation entitled "In Memory of Us: A Case Study of the CSJs at Avila University." For this project, she collected stories and wisdom from the CSJs who have been affiliated with Avila, as we plan to carry their legacy into the future. Whitacre also received the 2017 Alumni Service Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'78, '83 JULIE (VIENHAGE) WEISS received the 2017 Alumni Achievement Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'80 JOAN (VATTEROTT) KLEREKOPER recently joined the Oklahoma Baptist University faculty as assistant professor of nursing.

'80 ROBERT STEVENSON recently authored "Literary Translations; A Tool for Writers, Speakers and Students."

'81 LISA (MARTIN) SACKUVICH received the 2017 Outstanding Alumnus Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'85 S. MARGARET VINCENT, CSJ, recently had the Senior Clinic at St. Joseph's Medical Center named after her. Vincent helped open the first senior clinic at the hospital years ago.

'85 SCOTT WHITE recently joined the Avila University Alumni Board.

'86 LISA KAY (SCHAEFER) MORELAND was promoted to full professor at St. Louis Community College-Forest Park where she serves as a full-time professor of nursing.

'86 PAUL SULLIVAN received the 2017 School of Business Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'87 CONNIE HAWORTH is now serving as the social media manager for Missouri Puppy Mill Rescue.

'89, '04 CARMEN (CANZONERE) BISACCA recently joined the Avila University Alumni Board.

'89 DR. ANN (WYCOFF) RAAB was inducted into the Winnetonka High School Alumni Hall of Fame in 2016. Additionally, she began a new full-time job in the fall of 2017 as an anthropology instructor at Longview Community College in Lee's Summit, Mo. Last, but not least, her archaeological work in Bates County, Mo., is being featured in an upcoming episode of the PBS Series, "America, From the Ground Up."

'94 MINDY MILLER-WALDRON recently joined the Avila University Alumni Board.

'95 DEREK E. FEAGANS is now general counsel for ProPharma Group.

'96 ANA VALDEZ recently accepted a new position as chair of the business and technology departments at Donnelly College in Kansas City, Kan.

'97, '99 JANE (TARASOVA) HOUSE received the 2017 School of Business Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'00 KELLEY MCDONALD received the 2017 School of Science and Health Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'00 AMY YOUNG became digital creative director at Avadim Technologies in May 2017.

'02 SARAH (HALL) MCKEE and husband, Denny, welcomed their first child, Oliver Thomas McKee, on June 26, 2017.

'05 DACIA BUSCH was selected as an ethics commissioner for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County-Kansas City, Kansas. She will serve a four-year term beginning in August 2017.

'05 ALLIE (MACLEAN) LAWRENCE and husband, Ronny, welcomed their first baby, Charlotte Ruby Jo Lawrence, on July 5, at 6:07 p.m. She weighed eight pounds, eight ounces, and was



20 inches long. In her first few months of life, she has already been to Michigan and Wichita to visit family and attended a Royals and a Chiefs game.

'06 MARIE BALDWIN received the 2017 School of Visual & Communication Arts Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'07, '13 MEGAN CARNES received the 2017 School of Education Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.

'07 LISA (PATTY) SUSUNAGA received the 2017 School of Nursing Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend.



'10, '15 CRISTINA (BAKER) COWAN and husband, Josh, welcomed their first child, Norah Rose, on September 2, 2017.



'09 ANN (CHRISMAN) TERRY married Tyler Terry on May 13, 2017. The couple resides in Raymore, Mo.

'07, '12 MARCHEL TURNER was recently named Bartlett Center's new executive director.



'08 BILLY FIRN was recently promoted to athletic director at Grand Rapids Community College in Grand Rapids, Mich.. Billy and wife,

Kelsie, also welcomed their third child, Jack William, on August 1, 2017. He weighed eight pounds, four ounces, and was 21 inches long.

'09 LISA (BURKS) ALIZADEH and husband, Reza, moved back to Kansas City in September.

'09 RYAN BRENNER and wife, Megan, welcomed their second child, Emma, in August 2017.

'09 DARRYLAN (ROBINSON) DUNN married Rondale Dunn on July 29 in St. Louis, Mo. The couple resides in Platte City, Mo.



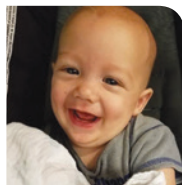
'09 ASHLEY (TOWNSEND) HARDWICK and husband, **'11 RYAN**

welcomed their first child, Caden Ryan on August 18, 2017. Caden weighed eight pounds, two ounces and was 20 inches long.



'09 BAILEY (KYLE) PYLE and husband, Mike, welcomed their second daughter, Harper, on April 16, 2017. Harper joins big sister, Kennedy.

'09 MIKE STOLBERG and wife, Sarah, welcomed son Taylor John on May 6, 2017. Taylor was six pounds, six ounces.



'09, '14 MICHELE WATLEY was named as one of Campaigns & Elections

magazine 2017 Rising Stars. The award goes to a select group of operatives age 35 and under who have an established track record of achievement in political consulting or advocacy and the promise to achieve greatness.



ounces, and was 20 inches long. The happy family lives in Florida.

'10 BERNADETTE (WEEKS) BARTH WEEKS recently joined the Avila University Alumni Board.

'10 JACQUELINE (SHARP) HATFIELD married Michael Hatfield on June 10, 2017.

'10 EMILEE (BILYEU) REHLING recently joined the Avila University Alumni Board.

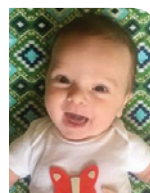
'10 JUSTIN REED graduated from Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in May with his doctorate in osteopathic medicine. He is in his residency at University of Oklahoma-Tulsa.

'10 BANEN (CHANEY) ROYER accepted the position as full-time head cheer coach with St. Mary's University. Banen was also recently named to the Avila University Alumni Board.

'10 EMILY (RYAN) SNYDER married Will Snyder on May 28, 2017. The couple resides in Lathrop, Mo.

'10 TIM WOLF recently got engaged to Juliette Knopp. The couple met working at Ernst and Young in St. Louis. They are planning a wedding in September 2018.

'11 EMMALYN (VOGT) CASE and husband, Mitch, welcomed their first child, Dean Xavier, on July 16, 2017. Dean weighed five pounds, 11 ounces.



'12 NATHAN BACON and wife, Jackie,

welcomed their first child, Laikyn Addison Bacon on August 31, 2017.

'12 MARC BENAVIDEZ was promoted to offensive coordinator with the Avila University football program.

'12 MJ BLAND recently moved back to Kansas City and accepted a coaching position with the Avila University football team.

'12, '15 SARA BOATWRIGHT recently moved back to Kansas City and accepted the community manager position with Hope House.

'12 ROBERTO CAMACHO AND '09, '14 MAX HASSELQUIST recently took 2nd place and a \$10,000 prize from the 2017 Regnier Venture Creation Challenge for their Wobblr's venture. They were featured on KC Live and presented at 1 Millions Cups for their venture, as well.

'12 CHANTELL GARRETT received the 2017 School of Professional Studies Alumni Award over Homecoming Weekend. Garrett also recently was recognized by Dillard University as a 40 Under 40 recipient.

'12 JOSH HEWITT AND WIFE, '14 PAIGE, recently moved to Fresno, Ca. where Josh accepted a position as Athletic Equipment Operations at California State University, Fresno.

'12, '16 EMILEE (BICKLEMAN) HILL began as marketing specialist at J.E. Dunn Construction in September 2017.

'12 TREVOR HOUSTON graduated from Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in May. He is in his residency in Las Vegas, Nevada.

'12 CORWIN PATIS received his doctorate in physical therapy in May, 2017. He started his career as a travel physical therapist at an outpatient orthopedic clinic in northern California.



'14 AMIN VARGHA married Sarah Donaldson, M.D. on August 12, 2017, in Chicago.

In Memoriam

'12 ERIN (SCHULTZ) POTTER and husband, **ERIC POTTER '12**, welcomed their second child, Penny Elizabeth, on July 30. She weighed seven pounds and two ounces, and was 19.25 inches long.

'12, '14 LISA YORK MARRIED **TROY ATKINSON '13** in September 9, 2017. They both played soccer at Avila. **MARIO CURIALE '17**, also an Avila soccer alumnus, married them.



'13 DUSTIN DEISHER AND LINDSEY SIEG '15 were united in marriage on June 3, 2017.

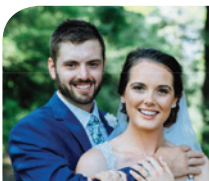
'13 ANTHONY KINNARD

graduated from Officer Candidate School in August 2016 and is now a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps.

'13 DERRICK LEWIS recently accepted a position with A. Zahner Company.

'13 JENN (MURPHY) MCDANIEL married Matthew McDaniel on June 10, 2017. The couple resides in Mississippi.

'13 MEIKA NWAOMAH recently started as a high school teacher at the Da Vinci Schools in California.



'13 TYLER SEABAUGH married Brittany King on September 2, 2017. The couple live in Greenwood, Mo.

'13 BRITTANY TOWNSEND AND '13 QUINTON BRANCH were united in marriage on September 9, 2017.

'14 ADINA GEBHARD was recently accepted into the pediatric nurse practitioner program at UMKC.

'14 JASON LEONE was recently named the assistant baseball coach with Indiana University Kokomo.

'14 TRACIE (GEILE) MCNAIR married **JOHN MCNAIR '15** in June 2017.

'14 KRISTEN (RIDDLE) NAGEL and husband, Korey, welcomed their first child, Kynlee, on July 28, 2017.

'14 ALEXIS NIBERT recently accepted the position of project coordinator at Ace Pipe Cleaning Inc.

'15 VICTORIA ANDERSON accepted a new position as associate producer at KDFW-TV FOX 4 Dallas-Fort Worth.

'15 KAYLEN PELTIER recently accepted a new position as clinical allergy specialist for United Allergy Services.

'15 VINCENT SAVIANO recently married Ashley Rogge on June 10, 2017. The couple resides in Kansas City.

'16 ROBERT GLORIA and wife, Katie, welcomed their first child, Violet Jean, on September 25, 2017. Gloria is the assistant director of Financial Aid for Avila.

'16 ASHLEY JONES recently accepted the position of NICU nurse at Children's Mercy.

'16 PATRICK MOORE recently accepted an assistant football coach position with Duchesne High School in St. Charles, Mo.

'16 MIKKA SHELEY recently moved to Nashville, and is working at Universal Music Publishing Group.

'17 NICOLETTE LOCKARD recently started working for the Independence school district as a youth development teacher (before and after school teacher).

'17 TOMOS RIDENHOUR was recently hired by Children's Mercy as a registered nurse.



DONA NEUMAN, PH.D.

Dona Neuman, Ph.D., passed away on July 10, 2017, after a 15-year battle with cancer. Neuman's name is synonymous with sociology at Avila. She joined the social science department in 1968 and taught until she retired as professor emerita after 38 years of service. After recognizing that no one course or discipline could encompass all information related to women's lives, she established an interdisciplinary women's studies program and it continues as a strong program at Avila today. Neuman also developed a gerontology program and brought an elderhostel program to campus. She is deeply missed and her legacy lives on through the Dona Neuman Endowed Scholarship Fund at Avila to support students in need. 🙏

Pictured above: Dona Neuman, Ph.D., and husband, Dale Neuman.

Stay Connected

We want to hear from you!

Job promotion, new baby, recent travels, or new home? Let us know so we can share your good news! Email your news to alumni@avila.edu or complete the **What's New With You** form at avila.edu/alumni.

In Memoriam

'38 S. RITA FLAHERTY, CSJ passed away on July 19, 2017. Flaherty was a general studies graduate of St. Teresa's College.

'46 MARY BURNS MITCHELL passed away on March 26, 2017. Mitchell attended St. Teresa's College.

'48 BARBARA (HUTCHINGS) CODDINGTON passed away on May 9, 2017. Coddington received her bachelor of science in chemistry from the College of St. Teresa.

'55 MARY ANN MYERS passed away on June 23, 2017. Myers attended the College of St. Teresa where she earned her bachelor's degree in biology.

'57 S. CLAIRERITA ATHA, CSJ, passed away on March 28, 2017. Atha earned her bachelor of science in nursing from the College of St. Teresa.

'58 ANNA KRAUS passed away on April 20, 2017. Kraus attended the College of St. Teresa where she earned her bachelor's degree in medical record administration. She went on to receive her master's degree in public health from UCLA and master's degree in teacher preparation for allied health professions from the State University of New York in Buffalo.

'59 CLEORA (CRITCHFIELD) WHEATLEY passed away on June 17, 2017. Wheatley received her bachelor of science in nursing from College of St. Teresa.

'65 MARY MARGARET RICHARDSON passed away on April 6, 2017. Richardson received her bachelor's degree in biology from Avila College. Starting out as one of the first five female FDA investigators in the country, Richardson had a 34-year career with the federal agency as a public affairs specialist.

'73 (EVA) SUSAN (TREFZ) LAITNER passed away June 29, 2017. Laitner received her bachelor of science in nursing from Avila College. Susan was a former Alumni Board member.

'74 MARILYN (PAULSON) KUEHNE passed away on April 2, 2017. Kuehne received her bachelor's degree in Education from Avila College.

'78 WILLIAM JEFFERSON passed away on June 17, 2017. Jefferson completed his bachelor's degree in personnel from Avila College.

'82 MARY WILLS passed away on April 13, 2017. Wills received her bachelor's degree in healthcare services at the age of 62 from Avila College.

'84 LESTER BROWN, JR., passed away on May 9, 2017. Brown received his bachelor of science in radiologic science from Avila College.

'86 JANET (HARMON) CLINE passed away on July 5, 2017. Cline received her bachelor's degree in psychology from Avila College. She went on to earn a Masters of Higher Education from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

'94 JULIE (LEITHAUSER) HEISINGER passed away on May 9, 2017. Heisinger received her bachelor of science in nursing from Avila College.

CHARLES KOPKE, a longtime supporter and friend of the University passed away on September 29, 2017.

ELVIRA MIGLIAZZO, mother of alumna Celeste Greenlee '14 and longtime supporter of Avila University, passed away on April 10, 2017.

SR. ESTELLE J. MURPHY, passed away on April 4, 2017. Murphy attended the College of Saint Teresa until she joined religious life in January 1947.

FRANK TOPLIKAR, former Board of Counselor, passed away on August 25, 2017.

JEANNE LILLIG-PATTERSON '80, '17 (HON.)

Jeanne Lillig-Patterson '80, '17 (Hon.) passed away on September 4, 2017, after a 10-year battle with cancer. Lillig-Patterson was the recipient of the Avila Medal of Honor, the 2017 recipient of an honorary doctorate from Avila, and an honorary chair of the Centennial Campaign. Her high school accomplishments helped her earn scholarships to attend Avila University, where she was a four-year NAIA volleyball athlete who was also active in theatre. She received the St. Catherine Medal of Honor in 1978 and graduated magna cum laude in 1980 with a bachelor of arts in music education and a minor in secondary education. Possessed with a strong work ethic, she was the seventh person hired by the medical software company Patterson, Gorup, Illig & Associates in 1981. She helped rename the company, Cerner, in 1984, and she eventually originated the roles of director of marketing and director of client services as the company grew.

In 1985, Lillig-Patterson founded Cerner's First Hand Foundation, a charity that addresses the unmet healthcare needs of children who have fallen through cracks in the insurance, federal and state aid systems. To date, the First Hand Foundation has helped more than 250,000 children in 93 countries. Lillig-Patterson was active in St. Sabina Catholic Church and served on numerous non-profit boards and committees. In addition to serving as honorary chair of Avila's Centennial Campaign, she funded scholarships for students in need through the Jeanne Lillig-Patterson Endowed Scholarship and supported faculty innovation through the Jeanne Lillig-Patterson Faculty Innovation Fund. Her legacy lives on through these funds, and her leadership and zeal is deeply missed on campus. 🙏





Avila President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA, inducts Marcia Kenley '98 into the Avila Heritage Society during the Heritage Luncheon on September 22.

Leaving a Legacy

By her early 40s, Marcia Kenley '98 made it her goal to graduate with a communications degree before she turned 50. When she enrolled at Avila, she found there to be a clear path and plenty of encouragement from her professors. She graduated at the age of 49.

As a member of Avila's board of counselors, Marcia became aware of the Heritage Society and reflected on how she could leave her legacy. "Let's face it, education is expensive," Kenley said. "But one of the things I am most impressed with is that Avila recruits disadvantaged students and helps them financially. I guess it hit me that if I wanted to help someone breathe easier, I'd have to act; and leaving a legacy gift to Avila was one way to accomplish it. And now that it's signed and sealed, I'm the one who's breathing easier."

Today Kenley wishes for a bright Avila future. She hopes that Avila continues to have strong, forward-thinking leaders, always with student development, growth and success in mind. She strives for Avila to continue partnering with the community at large to give each student a view of opportunities that will be satisfying and fulfilling.

Kenley also has some advice for those considering giving to Avila by way of the Heritage Society. "Make a phone call. It sounds simple, but that little voice in the back of your mind telling you to act will nag you until you actually do something. Call Avila and take a tour. Call your attorney and update your will. We all have limited time on this earth, and if we really want to leave the world a bit better, we must take action to ensure our wishes are fulfilled." 📞

Securing Avila's Heritage

The Heritage Society was established in 1988 to recognize the remarkable contributions of Avila alumni and friends who have made provisions in their estate plans or lifetime planned gifts to support the future needs of the university. Such provisions may include:

- Bequests through wills and trusts
- Charitable remainder or lead trusts
- Appreciated securities
- Real estate and life estates in homes
- Gift annuities
- Life insurance policies

To find out more about joining Avila's Heritage Society or the gift vehicles above, please contact JT Cattle, director of development, at 816.501.3696 or JT.Cattle@avila.edu



Be Inspired.

11901 Wornall Road
Kansas City, MO 64145
816.501.3602 • avila.edu

Avila University is sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

Nonprofit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Kansas City, MO
Permit No. 3045



Avila University's 42nd annual Steer Dinner & Auction

SAVE THE DATE

February 3, 2018

Dreams Fulfilled, Promises Honored

Roderick J. and Jo Anne Cyr Foundation & DJ and Ann O'Hare, Honorary Chairs
Rodd and Martha '66 Staker, Event Chairs

Kansas City Marriott Downtown, Muehlebach Tower
Steak Dinner • Live & Silent Auction

Tables of 10 \$2,500 • Individual tickets \$250 • Recent alumni tickets \$75 (for 2007-2017 classes)
All proceeds benefit Avila University student scholarships. • Sponsorship packages are available.

For more information, please call 816.501.3602 or email SteerDinner@avila.edu • Avila.edu/Steer